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slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording.

210. (Amended) A system in which television programs are displayed on user television equipment of a plurality of users comprising:

a television distribution facility configured to provide the television programs;

user television equipment that receives the television programs from the television distribution facility, wherein the user television equipment and television distribution facility are configured to:

store program listings for a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots;

allow a user to select an option that schedules a television program to be broadcast on a channel and at a time slot for recording;

automatically search through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording; and

display an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs.

229. (Amended) The system defined in claim 210 further configured to display an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs before automatically searching through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording.

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 43-59, 62, 64, 71-72, 74-77, 254, 127-142, 145, 147, 154-155, 157-160, 210-226, 229, 231, 238-239, 241-244 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Lawler et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,805,763 (hereinafter "Lawler"). Claims 60-61, 78, 80-81, 144-145, 161, 163-164, 228-229, 245,

247-248 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lawler in view of Alexander et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,177,931 (hereinafter "Alexander") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 65, 148, and 232 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lawler in view of Alexander and Alten et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,635,978 (hereinafter "Alten") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 66-70, 73, 149-153, 156, 233-237, and 240 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lawler in view of Young et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,949,954 (hereinafter "Young") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 79, 162, and 246 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lawler in view of Schein et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,388, 714 (hereinafter "Schein I") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 82-83, 165-166, 249-250 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lawler in view of Schein et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,323,911 (hereinafter "Schein II") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 84, 167, and 251 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lawler in view of Schein II and Kim et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,058,242 (hereinafter "Kim") under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended independent claims 43, 127, and 210, and dependent claims 62, 145, and 229 to more particularly define applicants' invention. As amended, claims 43, 127, and 210 make it clear that applicants' system stores program listings for a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots. The system allows a user to select an option that schedules a given television program for recording. After the given television program has been selected for recording, the system can automatically search through the program listings for those television programs that are part of a series of television programs that includes the given television program that was selected for recording. As made clear by the language of amended claims 43, 127, and 210, applicants' system searches through the program listings of television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots. The language of claims 43, 127, and 210 also make it clear that applicants' arrangement presents an option that allows a user to record any combination of television programs in the series of television programs. Dependent claims 62, 145, and 229 include the additional requirement that applicants' system can provide an option that allows a user to record any combination of television programs in the series of television programs before automatically searching through the program listings of television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots.

Lawler, which the Office Action relied on in rejecting claims 43, 127, and 210 describes a scheme that allows a user to record a particular television program, and then checks the same time slot and the same channel for the next week or day to see if a television program with the same title as the television program that the user has selected for recording. The user of the Lawler system is then provided with an option that allows automatic recording of programs with the same title as the previously selected television program on a daily (or weekly) basis if there is a television program the next day (or week) on the same channel and in the same time slot as the previously selected television program. If, however, the television program is part of a series that has programs that are not scheduled at the same time slot and on the same channel as the television program selected for recording, the Lawler automatic recording feature will fail to locate these other programs. With no way to locate and record these other television programs in the series automatically, a user of the Lawler system is likely to become frustrated and miss many desirable series episodes.

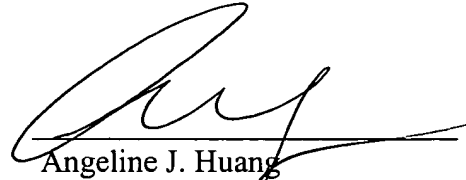
As set forth in claims 43, 127, and 210, applicants' arrangement searches a plurality of channels and plurality of time slots. This allows a user of applicants' system to automatically locate television programs in the same series as a selected program even if such television programs are located on other channels or time slots. Moreover, an option is displayed that allows the user to record any combination of programs that are part of the television series.

Because Lawler fails to show or suggest automatically searching stored program listings, upon selection of a program for recording, for a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots for a television series that includes the program selected for recording and because Lawler fails to show or suggest displaying an option for recording any combination of programs that are part of the television series, claims 43, 127, and 210 are not anticipated by Lawler. Independent claims 43, 127, and 210 are therefore allowable. Claims 44-61, 63, 65-85, 128-144, 146, 148-168, 211-228, 230, and 232-252, depend from claims 43, 127, and 210 and are allowable because claims 43, 127, and 210 are allowable.

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 43-63, 65-85, 127-146, 148-168, 210-230, and 232-252 are in condition for allowance. This application is therefore in

condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angeline J. Huang', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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Appendix
(Showing How Claims
Have Been Amended)

43. (Amended) An interactive television program guide system in which television programs are displayed on user television equipment of a plurality of users comprising:

means for storing program listings for a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots;

means for allowing a user to select an option that schedules a television program to be broadcast on a channel and at a time slot for recording;

means for automatically searching through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording; and

means for displaying an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs.

[means for allowing a user to select an option that schedules program recordings for each of the programs that are part of a given series; and

means for automatically recording each television program in the series.]

62. (Amended) The interactive television program guide system defined in claim 43, further comprising means for displaying an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs before automatically searching through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording.

[network broadcasts of given programs which are part of the series.]

127. (Amended) A method for displaying television programs on user television equipment of a plurality of users, comprising the steps of:

storing program listings for a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots;

allowing a user to select an option that schedules a television program to be broadcast on a channel and at a time slot for recording;

automatically searching through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording; and

displaying an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs.

[allowing a user to select an option that schedules program recordings for each of the programs that are part of a given series; and

automatically recording each television program in the series.]

145. (Amended) The method defined in claim 127 further comprising the step of displaying an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs before automatically searching through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording.

[for network broadcasts of given programs which are part of the series.]

210. (Amended) A system in which television programs are displayed on user television equipment of a plurality of users comprising:

a television distribution facility configured to provide the television programs;

user television equipment that receives the television programs from the television distribution facility, wherein the user television equipment and television distribution facility are configured to:

store program listings for a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots;

allow a user to select an option that schedules a television program to be broadcast on a channel and at a time slot for recording;

automatically search through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording; and

display an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs.

[allow a user to select an option that schedules program recordings for each of the programs that are part of a given series; and

automatically record each television program in the series.]

229. (Amended) The system defined in claim 210 further configured to display an option to schedule a recording of any combination of television programs in the series of television programs before automatically searching through the program listings for television programs on a plurality of channels and a plurality of time slots that are part of a series of television programs that includes the television program selected for recording.

[display an option to schedule a recording for network broadcasts of given programs which are part of the series.]